



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **LAUNCH OF THE AU PHYSICAL SECURITY AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT PROJECT DATABASE FOR THE SAHEL REGION**

**24 April 2019:** The African Union Defence and Security Division of the Peace and Security Department, in Partnership with the German Federal Foreign Office and Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC), have launched a new Database ([www.pssm.peaceau.org](http://www.pssm.peaceau.org)) to support Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the Sahel Region.

The purpose of the database is to create visibility on ongoing and completed interventions in the field of small arms and light weapons (SALW) control, to improve and synchronize the effectiveness of counter-proliferation efforts, through enhanced information sharing and coordination between AU Member States, regional organizations, donors and implementing agencies, and to draw attention on the subject as a whole. Additionally, the database offers support through the AU Roster of PSSM Practitioners to link State and implementer needs with qualified capacities. The database covers sixteen countries in the Sahel region and provides information on ongoing and completed projects, as well as research and assessment regarding different aspects of Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM).

The database supports and complements the joint AU-Germany project, launched in 2015, with technical support from the Bonn International Centre for Conversion (BICC). It focuses on enhancing capacity development and providing advice to AU-Member States to improve management of SALW and prevent their diversion. Within this project, the AU and its partners have established a Roster of PSSM Practitioners, and developed and disseminated relevant Operational Guidance Notes, while providing ongoing support to the Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020.

The diversion of State-owned SALW constitutes a key source of illicit arms in the continent, especially within the Sahel Region. Therefore PSSM enhances national capacities to secure SALW and conventional ammunition stockpiles, which are often vulnerable to theft and diversion to non-state actors if not properly managed. Secondly, PSSM reduces the risk of unplanned explosions due to inappropriate storage thus reducing potential threats to human life and infrastructure.

PSSM is also an integral component of the AU's "Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020" and its "Plan of Action on SALW" (StG-PoA). Going forward, [www.pssm.peaceau.org](http://www.pssm.peaceau.org) will be broadened in its thematic and regional scope to provide users and visitors with information on interventions in a range of priority areas across Africa including; marking; record-keeping and tracing; transfer and end use/r controls and

brokering. Additionally the database will give information about cross-border cooperation activities; legislative and regulatory frameworks; institutional structures and national coordination mechanisms; criminal justice response; embargo enforcement and registration and voluntary disarmament. The overarching goals underpinning the development of the database are the need to enhance universality and outreach on different approaches to the Silencing the Guns Plan of Action. The database is thus envisaged as a tool to facilitate cooperation and coordination between different key stakeholders to contribute to “Silence the Guns by 2020”.

### **Further information**

#### **African Union Commission**

Peace and Security Department

Phone: +251 11 551 3822

E-mail: [SituationRoom@africa-union.org](mailto:SituationRoom@africa-union.org)

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/au\\_psd](https://twitter.com/au_psd)

#### **Bonn International centre for Conversion**

Susanne Heinke

Head of public relations

phone: +49 (0)228/911 96-44 / -0

email: [pr@bicc.de](mailto:pr@bicc.de)

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/BICC\\_Bonn](https://twitter.com/BICC_Bonn)

#### **German Federal Foreign Office**

Lisa Müller-Dormann

Project Officer, Conventional Arms Control, SALW

Phone: +49 (0)30/5000-4183

E-mail: [or10-13@auswaertiges-amt.de](mailto:or10-13@auswaertiges-amt.de)

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